Approved For Release 2007/06/14 : CIA-RDP99-00498R000100160005-2

ARTICLE APPEARED
ON PAGE A-13

NEW YORK TIMES
26 MARCH 1979

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Intelligence Prediction Of the Chinese Attack On Vietnam Reported

By CHARLES MOHR
Special to The New York Times

WASHINGTON, March 25. — The United States intelligence community made a "prescient forecast" of the Chinese attack on Vietnam six weeks before it occurred and, on the whole, did a good job of informing policy makers of the moves of Asian nations in the recent Far Eastern crisis, according to a member of Congress who conducted an investigation into intelligence procedures.

A report by Representative Les Aspin, Democrat of Wisconsin, also commended Adm. Stansfield Turner, the Director of Central Intelligence, for encouraging the publication of differing views in intelligence documents.

Such efforts "to make differences of opinion inside the intelligence community known to policy makers should be continued and strengthened," Mr. Aspin wrote.

The six-page report was based on closed hearings of the House Intelligence subcommittee on oversight conducted by Mr. Aspin.

'Good Job' Collecting Data

His report said that intelligence analysts "did a good job" of collecting information on military deployments and abilities as tensions rose last year between Vietnam and Cambodia and between China and Vietnam.

The intelligence experts were less successful in forecasting the intentions of the nations involved in the crisis, Mr. Aspin said. They tended to discount the intention of Vietnam to seize much Cambodian territory and later overestimated the possibility that the Soviet Union would take action against China in retaliation for China's invasion of Vietnam, he said.

His report, however, indicated that even when there were errors in forecasting intentions, they were corrected in the course of the crisis.

"In the wake of the intelligence confusion over what was happening in Iran last year," Mr. Aspin wrote, "it is reassuring to find that the intelligence community did a far better, if still imperfect, job in its handling of the latest Indochina crisis."

He said in a telephone interview that one reason intelligence had been better in the Indochina crisis was that "it had no policy implications and therefore wasn't used as ammunition in a bureaucratic

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